(b) the number of trained pilots of helicopters in the country; and

(c) the details of the training and refresher courses of helicopter pilots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) As per the records of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), there are 90 helicopters having Non Scheduled Operators Permit and 421 Commercial Helicopters Pilot Licence holders in the country.

(c) Helicopter pilots engaged in commercial operation undergo initial training/conversion training for endorsement on type of helicopter as per the training recommended by manufacturer and flying experience of the pilot concerned and training syllabus approved by DGCA. The training is conducted by approved Helicopter Examiners. The helicopter pilots are also required to undergo bi-annual proficiency checks as per requirement under the Aircraft Rules. The proficiency check requirements include re-current ground training and specific emergency exercises.

Air Services Agreement with Singapore

4191. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Singapore had proposed to sign a pact on bilateral flights;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposal has now been turned down by Singapore;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There is already a bilateral Air Services Agreement between India and Singapore, which was signed in 1968. This agreement has been amended from time to time during bilateral air services consultations and as per the existing arrangements either side can designate any number of airlines to operate agreed number of services on the agreed routes.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.